

Calendar Nos. 624, 625, 626

86TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
No. 625

STATUE OF ESTHER MORRIS PRESENTED BY THE STATE OF WYOMING FOR THE NATIONAL STATUARY HALL COLLECTION

AUGUST 6, 1959.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. HENNINGS, from the Committee on Rules and Administration;
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. Con. Res. 55, S. Con. Res. 56, and S. Con. Res. 57]

The Committee on Rules and Administration, to whom were referred the concurrent resolutions (S. Con. Res. 55, S. Con. Res. 56, and S. Con. Res. 57) providing respectively for the temporary placement of, the acceptance of, and the printing of the proceedings in connection with the dedication of the statue of Esther Morris, presented by the State of Wyoming for the National Statuary Hall collection, having considered said concurrent resolutions, report favorably on Senate Concurrent Resolution 55 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 56 without amendment, and on Senate Concurrent Resolution 57 with amendments, and recommend that the concurrent resolutions as reported be agreed to by the Senate.

EXPLANATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS

ACCEPTANCE OF THE STATUE

Senate Concurrent Resolution 56

This resolution would accept in behalf of the United States, with the thanks of Congress, a statue of Esther Morris—

illustrious for her distinguished civic service to the Territory and the State of Wyoming, and for her historic renown as the proponent and advocate of a law bestowing the right to vote and to hold office upon the women of the Territory of Wyoming, the first government in the world to give the right of equal suffrage to its women, and the first woman to assume the responsibility of equal suffrage by becoming the first woman in the world to serve as a justice of the peace. * * *

as Wyoming's first contribution¹ to the National Statuary Hall collection.

PROCEEDINGS IN ROTUNDA

Senate Concurrent Resolution 55

This resolution would authorize the temporary placement of the statue of Esther Morris in the rotunda of the Capitol and the holding of appropriate ceremonies under the supervision of the Architect of the Capitol.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS

Senate Concurrent Resolution 57

This resolution would authorize the printing as a House document of the proceedings at the dedication of the statue of Esther Morris, with 3,000 additional copies to be distributed as follows: 100 copies for the use of the Senate, 1,600 copies for the use of the Senators from Wyoming, 500 copies for the use of the House of Representatives, and 800 copies for the use of the Representatives from Wyoming. As the proceedings will take place at an undetermined future date, it is not possible at this time to obtain a printing-cost estimate. The document will be prepared, however, under the supervision of the Joint Committee on Printing, charged by law with keeping Government printing costs at a desirable minimum.

Committee amendments.—The committee recommends that Senate Concurrent Resolution 57 be amended as follows:

On page 1, lines 6, 7, and 10, strike out the word "House" and insert in lieu thereof the word "Senate".

The amendments would provide that the proceedings be printed as a Senate document, the appropriate format inasmuch as the concurrent resolution originated in the Senate, rather than as a House document as provided in the concurrent resolution as introduced.

ENACTMENT OF THE WYOMING STATE LEGISLATURE

The following enactment by the Wyoming State Legislature, approved February 5, 1955, designates Esther Morris as the first citizen of the State of Wyoming whose memory will be honored by the inclusion of a sculptured likeness among the National Statuary Hall collection in the U.S. Capitol:

CHAPTER 45

Original House Bill No. 131

STATUE OF ESTHER MORRIS

AN ACT To provide for a statue of Esther Morris in the Capitol of the United States, and creating a commission for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act

Be It Enacted By the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

PROVISION FOR MARBLE OR BRONZE STATUE

SECTION 1. The purpose of this enactment is to provide for a statue, in marble or bronze, of Esther Morris, to be placed in the Capitol of the United States for national com-

¹ Pursuant to the act of July 2, 1864 (Rev. Stat. sec. 1814; 40 U.S.C. 187).

memoration, in accordance with the provisions of the Act of July 2, 1864 (sec. 187 of title 40 of the United States Code Annotated).

NATIONAL COMMEMORATION

SEC. 2. Esther Morris, deceased, is illustrious for her distinguished civic service to the Territory and the State of Wyoming, and for her historic renown as the proponent and advocate of a law bestowing the right to vote and to hold office upon the women of the Territory of Wyoming, the first government in the world to give the right of equal suffrage to its women, and the first woman to assume the responsibility of equal suffrage by becoming the first woman in the world to serve as a justice of the peace. The State of Wyoming therefore deems her worthy of national commemoration.

CREATION OF COMMISSION—SEVEN CITIZENS

SEC. 3. There is hereby created a Commission of seven citizens of the State of Wyoming for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act. The Governor of the State of Wyoming shall be chairman of, and a member of, such Commission, and shall appoint the six other members of such Commission from among the citizens of the State.

DUTIES OF COMMISSION

SEC. 4. It shall be the duty of such Commission to cause to be made a statue, in marble or bronze, of Esther Morris by a sculptor qualified in this medium of art. The Commission shall exercise such authority as it shall deem necessary and appropriate to carry out the purposes of this Act.

STATUE—PLACED IN CAPITOL OF UNITED STATES

SEC. 5. When completed and accepted by such Commission, the statue shall be placed in the Capitol of the United States, in accordance with the provisions of section 187 of title 40 of the United States Code Annotated, and shall there remain as commemorative of this citizen's distinguished service to the Territory and the State of Wyoming.

DETERMINE COST OF PROJECT

SEC. 6. It shall be the duty of such Commission to determine insofar as possible the anticipated cost of this project, and to direct the method of collecting or obtaining the funds necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Approved February 5, 1955.

BIOGRAPHY OF ESTHER MORRIS

The following biography of Esther Morris is reproduced from "A Woman of the Century," by Willard & Livermore:

MORRIS, Mrs. Esther, justice, born in Spencer, Wyoming County, N.Y., in 1813. She comes of a long line of English ancestry. Her early years were spent amid the struggles of pioneer life following the Revolution. Daniel McQuigg, her grandfather, fought on the side of the American Colonies and

afterwards served as a captain under General Sullivan in the expedition that drove the Indians out of western New York. Under his commission her father was entitled to a farm, which he located near Owego, N.Y., and was one of the first 12 settlers of Tioga County. Esther's efforts to better the condition of women arose from no sudden conversion. Left an orphan at 11 years of age, she was early thrown upon her own resources. For a number of years she carried on successfully a millinery business in Owego. Before her marriage, at the age of 28, she had acquired a competence. She became the wife of Artemus Slack, a civil engineer by profession, and at that time engaged in the construction of the Erie Railroad. He died several years thereafter, leaving his wife a large tract of land in Illinois, where he had been engaged as a chief engineer in building the Illinois Central Railroad. With an infant in her arms, she removed to the West. During the settlement of that estate she fully realized the injustice of the property laws in their relation to women. In the long conflict with slavery she was an early and earnest worker. In 1845 she became the wife of John Morris, a merchant of Peru, Ill., and for more than 20 years resided in that place, rearing her family and being an earnest helper in the church, schools, and other good works. In 1869 she joined her husband and three sons in South Pass, Wyo., and there she administered justice in a little court that became famous throughout the world. During her term of office, which covered a period of 1 year, Judge Morris tried about 50 cases, and no decision of hers was ever reversed by a higher court on appeal. She became a widow in 1876, since which time she has resided in Wyoming, where her three sons are prominently identified with the growth and progress of the new State. She is justly regarded as the mother of woman suffrage in Wyoming, having inaugurated the movement there. She was the first woman who ever administered the office of justice of the peace. It has been sometimes said that the law giving equal rights to women in Wyoming was passed as a joke and as a means of advertising the new Territory of Wyoming, but Colonel Bright, who is now a resident of Washington, asserts that it was no joking matter with him, that he favored it because he believed it was right. The condition of Wyoming at that time is of interest. With an area greater than all of the New England States combined, Wyoming, in 1869, had a population of less than 10,000, mostly scattered in small frontier villages along the line of the newly constructed Union Pacific Railroad. The northern portion of the Territory was given over to roving tribes of wild Indians, with here and there a few mining camps held by adventurous gold seekers. Several hundreds of those miners had penetrated into the country known as the Sweetwater mines, the chief town of which was South Pass City, and contained about 2,000 people. There Governor Campbell commissioned Mrs. Morris to hold the office of justice of the peace. [Mrs. Morris died in Cheyenne, Wyo., April 2, 1902.]